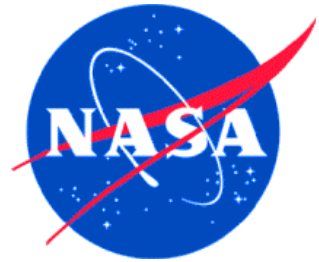


NASA News

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Glenn Research Center

21000 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, OH 44135-3191
216-433-2901



For Release
March 21, 2011

Sandra Nagy
Media Relations Office
216-433-9079
Sandra.L.Nagy@nasa.gov

RELEASE: 11- 015

NASA SELECTS FINALISTS IN BALLOONSAT COMPETITION

CLEVELAND -- NASA has selected four high school teams as finalists in the 2011 Balloonsat High Altitude Flight competition.

The winning teams' experiments will be launched on a NASA helium weather balloon between May 18 and 20. Because balloon flights are weather-contingent, the exact flight day will be announced that week.

The weather balloon will be sent into the stratosphere, a near-space environment at an altitude of approximately 100,000 feet.

The selected high school teams and their experiments are:

Charlottesville High School, Charlottesville, Va. -- "The Effect of Near-Space on Solar Powered Climate Control"

Harding University High School, Searcy, Ark. -- "Measuring Gases in the Atmosphere as a Function of Altitude"

Neighborhood After-School Science Association, Ava, N.Y. -- "Viability of Hydroponic Gardens in Near Space Conditions"

North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, Durham, N.C. -- "Variations in Energy Output of Solar Cells at Varying Altitudes Compared to Weight and Cost"

During the flight days, the student teams will release, track and recover their experiments, and then present their findings at the Balloonsat Symposium that will be held Friday, May 20 at NASA's Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, who is hosting the event.

The teams will be evaluated on team participation during the launch as well as research presentations and a written report about their experiments' final results. The winning team will receive an award from Glenn representatives at a special presentation at their school in the fall.

The four finalist teams were selected from 22 student teams in grades nine through 12 from the United States and its territories.

Four additional student teams have been selected to participate in virtual flight days via the Internet, where NASA scientists and engineers will launch and recover their payloads during the week of May 23. The selected teams and their experiments are:

Glenbrook North High School, Northbrook, Ill. - "High Altitude Solar Cell Experiment"

Lubbock High School, Lubbock, Texas - "Measure-O-Meter"

North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, Durham, N.C. - "Determination of Reaction Rates of Titanium Dioxide Photolytic Cells in Near-Space Conditions"

Toms River High School South, Toms River, N.J. -- "The Energy Potential of a Wind Turbine in the Stratosphere"

Balloonsat and similar educational programs help NASA attract and retain students in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. These disciplines are critical to the agency's future programs and missions. The Balloonsat High-Altitude Flight competition is sponsored by Glenn's Educational Programs Office and is funded by the Teaching From Space Office at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston.

For more information about Balloonsat, visit:

<http://www.grc.nasa.gov/WWW/balloonsat>

For more information about NASA's education programs, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov/education>

For information about NASA's Glenn Research Center, visit:

<http://www.nasa.gov/glenn>

- end -